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Public Papers of the Presidents

people. Consequently I think it would be unwise and result in confusion in the public mind if I were to attend the meeting in the White House to which you have invited me.

As you know, the problems which you suggest for discussion are those with which I have lived for many years. In spite of this I would instantly change this decision in the event there should arise a grave emergency. There is nothing in your message to indicate that this is presently the case.

With respect to the weekly reports from the Central Intelligence Agency that you kindly offered to

send me, I will welcome these reports. In line with my view, however, that the American people are entitled to all the facts in the international situation, save only in those cases where the security of the United States is involved, I would want it understood that the possession of these reports will in no other way limit my freedom to discuss or analyze foreign programs as my judgment dictates.

Very respectfully,

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

* See also Item 228 [3].

228 The President's News Conference of
August 14, 1952

THE PRESIDENT. Please be seated.

[1.] On the 14th of August I wrote a letter to Mr. Junius Wood of Holland, Michigan, about the Minerva clock and the Hannibal clock, and also about the scattering of the antique White House furniture.¹ I thought maybe you might be interested in it. Copies will be available to you, if you want them. And I would be glad for every one of you to take a look at them. It has got some historical information in it that you might be interested in.

[2.] Q. Mr. President, before we get around to weightier subjects, the Arkansas Gazette has asked me to inquire about your reaction on the defeat of Governor Sid McMath in the primary?²

THE PRESIDENT. No comment. Tell the Arkansas Gazette I have no comment. [Laughter]

[3.] Q. Mr. President, where do we stand now on this exchange of messages between you and General Eisenhower?³ Is there anything more to be said?

THE PRESIDENT. Well I think probably it might be well for me to give you the background on that situation.

Some 10 days ago about, maybe—might

¹ See Item 229.

² In the run-off primary held in Arkansas on August 12, Judge Francis Cherry defeated incumbent Sidney S. McMath for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination.

³ See Item 227.

have been a longer or a shorter time—I discussed with the Central Intelligence Agency the propriety of keeping the presidential candidates informed on the situation around the world. And we arrived at a conclusion that it would be a good plan to brief each one of them, in the first place, and then furnish them with the information at regular intervals. Most of this information is not for general distribution, and it cannot be used publicly because it is top secret and is security information.

I asked the Governor of Illinois to come and be briefed,⁴ and then asked the candidate of the Republican Party to come and get the same sort of treatment.

You know the rest.

No comment on my part is necessary any further. I would like very much, though, to have each one of you familiarize yourselves with a Senate document. It is Senate Document 87. It was issued on October the 20th, 1951, by the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate. It is a unanimous report on the bipartisan foreign policy, and the history of the operations of that policy almost from its beginning. You can get some very good information out of that document.

Q. Mr. President, I think one thing that is left hanging is whether General Eisenhower will get the CIA reports?

⁴ See Item 224.